THE

"HINDU MESSAGE"

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

Editors: K Sundararama Aiyar M.A., & T. K. Balasubrahmanya Aiyar B.A.

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The **Hindu Message** stands for

(1) The Maintenance of British supremacy with self-government for India,

(2) Co-operation with the different communities of India without prejudice to Hindu Dharma,

(3) Education of the Hindus as an integral part of the Indian Nation,

(4) Advancement of Material prosperity on a spiritual basis and

(5) Dissemination of pure Hindu Culture.

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INDIA'S BEAUTY.

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

Crowned with the loftiest mountain's spotless snows,
Thy lotus feet kissed by the smiling seas,
Around thy form a tranquil sunlit peace
Or dark-hued clouds lit with the lightning's glows
Thou shinest. Nature in her gladness throws
Each year an emerald garment o'er thy trees
And fruitful fields. The amorous southern breeze
Breathes fragrance as it softly sings and goes
What joy to have the blessed gift of birth
In Thee, with low-bowed heads to kiss thy frame,
To gaze upon Thy glorious golden face,
O sweetest 'midst thy sister climes on earth
O thou with sweet symphonious heavenly name,
O thou bright-dowered with God's measureless grace,

The Hindu Message

THURSDAY EVENING 8. NOV. 1917.

India and Federalism.

I.

Mr. C. Vijiaraghavachariar of Salem is an Indian politician of a type rare not only in India to-day, but in any country at any time,—a high souled statesman and patriot who has never bargained with the powers that be or with his own conscience. To fight like a lion for what he deems the right, to suffer for it if need be, to retain his cheerfulness and hopefulness under all conditions,—are noble qualities which have characterised him throughout his public career, as they have done all great souls everywhere. In the Madras Presidency at least he seems the most towering figure of all in the politics of a generation past. When a statesman so honest and so straightforward comes out of his enforced retirement,—an enforcement which we regret exceedingly, especially at a time when great events are about to happen in the land,—to address his countrymen on the pressing question of Indian constitutional reform, his views are entitled to the most dispassionate and earnest consideration we can give to them.

Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar's main contention is that India requires a unitarian, *not* a federal, type of government. The present form of government is unitarian, and must be maintained,—whatever changes may be made to give it a basis of popular representation. He contends that all federal states must be weak centrally, and he wants the central power in the Indian state to be strong. He fears that if a federal Indian state takes the place of the present unitarian one, "the local governments now existing and hereafter to come into existence would be converted into *states* with sovereign powers," and that they would gain power at the expense of the central or federal power; that federal patriotism would be a derivative patriotism, and one "which has been found everywhere unequal to great national purposes." Before we discuss this point, we will first offer a few remarks on the authority of Dicey's treatise on Constitutional Law on which he chiefly relies. Dicey's views and interpretation of the laws of political science were influenced by the Irish demand for Home Rule under Parnell's leadership and by England's determined opposition to it till Mr. Gladstone's marvellous genius, keen popular sympathies, and unrivalled influence with the British electorate roused men everywhere to a sense of Ireland's wrongs and sufferings Since then opinion has grown and now Ireland is on the eve of obtaining all she had lost at the Union, or even centuries earlier. Sir J. R. Seeley's authority in the science of politics which Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar is disposed to disregard is no whit less than that of Dicey's. We have also the valuable and distinguished authority of Sidgwick in favour of federalism. He teaches in pregnant words,—"when we turn our gaze from the past to the future an extension of federalism seems to me the most probable of the political prophecies relative to the form of government." Sidgwick also says:—"I think it not beyond the limits of a similar forecast to conjecture that some further integration may take place in the West European states; and if it

should take place, it seems probable that the new political aggregate will be formed on the basis of a federal policy." This "forecast" of Sidgwick's seems to us to have been made with special reference to the conditions in Ireland ; and, if so, there seems to be every prospect of its attaining its fulfilment within a measurable distance of time.

We quite sympathise with Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar's requirement that we must have a strong central power. But it is a mistake to suppose that only a unitary state can possess a strong central power. Dicey's authority on which he relies cannot stand,—for, as already shown, it is founded on ignoble political prejudices. Let us, next see what reason Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar has to assign. He says that, "the local governments would be converted into states with sovereign powers." To this we cannot agree. The local governments are *not* similar in status to the members of what is known as *Staaten bund* (or confederacy) as distinguished from *Bundesstaat* (federal state). Strictly speaking, those unions in which individual members or states possess "sovereign powers" must be founded on treaty relations, for we cannot imagine, or find in actual fact, any other means by which they can enter into mutual relations with each other. Wherever this is the case, we have really no federal state, but a confederation like that of Austro-Hungary. In contrast to this, we have unions where the separate members possess no "sovereign powers,"—where the central state or sovereign power has the power to control the activities of the separate members for its own ends and can draw to itself, whenever need arises, the rights of the separate members, and where the competence of the separate members to exercise such powers (even though they form part of the sovereign powers exercised by a unitary state) as they possess is only derived from the will and consent of the central or federal state. Here the separate members are really not *states*, for they have not really the attribute of sovereignty. In Unions of this kind, we have to distinguish the Union from the separate members. The Union is the only *real* state, and the separate members are only states *in name*. Prof. Burgess, the author of a great American work on Comparative Constitutional Law says:—"If sovereignty in the federal system be exclusively in the Union, then it seems to me that this makes the Union the only real state, and that the only distinction which remains between the separate states and the Municipalities lies in the fact that, while the Municipalities derive their authority from the states in a positive and definite manner, the states derive their power from the Union in a permissive and general manner. To be completely scientific, then, in our nomenclature and emancipate ourselves completely from the power of customary phrases, we should give the name *state* only to the union and find some other term to designate its members." What we have said here shows that Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar applies the term *state* only in a loose and unscientific and popular way to our local governments, and the latter have no "sovereign powers," except what they derive from the central government. Burgess points out that in America the separate members of the Union are no longer always called states, but also *Commonwealths*. He

says, "In America, we have already the suitable title, *Commonwealth*." In England, however, it is the Union or central power in a federal state that is called Commonwealth, e.g., *the Commonwealth of Australia*. But this does not in any way interfere with the truth and force of our contention above that the central (or federal) state in a federal union is not less strong than a unitary state. President Wilson says of the American Union:—"Government with us has ceased to be plural and has become singular, the *government* of the United States; distinct as are the parts they are not separate;" and this is the case, notwithstanding the fact that, as Dr. Wilson says, "the states are not administrative divisions, but constituent members of the Union." Dr. Wilson calls the American Union, "a single system," but that it is not a unitary government. The truth is that Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar does not fully appreciate the fact that sovereignty represents the supremacy of the will of the state as a person and so is a unity and indivisible. The sovereignty of the state can never be divided, even though its powers may be distributed. Sovereignty is independent of its powers, and means only the supreme will of the state. "The will of the state may find its form of expression through different mouthpieces, and its activities may be exercised through a variety of organs, but the will itself, as thus variously expressed and performed, is a unity. In every political organisation there must be one and only source, whence all authority ultimately springs." Says Rousseau, "Though Power may be divided, will cannot."

Mr. Vijiaraghava Chariar expresses the fear that the federal system will "involve the partitioning existing nationalism and patriotism to the whole country into major and minor compartments to the great injury of both." He also goes on to enunciate the principle that "in the most perfectly organised federal governments the patriotism to the second and national government is but a derivative one," and that "this derived patriotism has been found everywhere unequal to great national purposes." Whether or not the popular sentiment of patriotism is strong depends on the nature of the arrangements made for the representation of the people in the central Legislature." In the United States, the Federal House of Representatives is made directly to represent the people of all the separate *commonwealths* (or states) proportionally to population, and the suffrage is a wide one. In India, at present the majority of the representatives of the Imperial Government are elected by the Provincial Legislatures, and not directly by the people. Hence the representatives do not carry with them the popular mandate or command popular appreciation of the work they do, and thus fail to evoke popular devotion and enthusiasm. The central government whether federal or unitary can never command popular appreciation, or gain popular devotion and enthusiasm, for itself, so a tertiary, or even more distant, system of representation remains as at present. In the United States, the franchise is not only wide, but the people in all states send representatives direct to the federal House of Representatives, the number sent varying with the population.

II

Having disposed of the theories of Mr. Vijayaraghavachariar, we shall briefly deal with the question from a practical point of view. The two factors that enter into a determination of the question whether India should have a federal or unitarian form of Government, are, *first*, the needs of the situation, and *secondly* the materials at our disposal. The *practical* settlement of the matter will depend almost solely or mainly on these circumstances. Of course, the influence of traditions and past history and the lessons afforded by foreign example will, to a certain extent, influence the final decision, but these considerations must necessarily and obviously have a subordinate importance.

Growth is the ruling principle in the life of every community. But, what is the kind of growth we long for ? When knowledge is gained, man wishes for something which he has not, and then strives to attain to it. जानाति, इच्छति, करोति as the Vedantin says. Man knows, then desires, then strives,—and grows accordingly. We quite agree with Mr. Vijayaraghavachariar when he sums up the needs of every Indian Presidency or Province as "the developing of her resources and strengthening her power." Of these two aims, we consider the development of our resources is and ought to be, the paramount consideration with all Indian statesmen to-day. The Indian people everywhere are now in the lowest condition of economic vitality, and are increasingly falling a prey to starvation, disease and pestilence. Every available means must be adopted to develop our resources ; every protective or precautionary measure must be taken to prevent the drain of them from abroad. For this the power and resources of the local authorities and legislature must be the highest possible. The question is whether it will suffice to have a merely local "administrative unit"—to use Mr. Vijayaraghavachariar's own expression—controlled by a strong central and unitary authority, or a national government which can enlist the enthusiasm and capture the imagination of the mass of its citizens and their leaders. With this consideration in view, we cannot help arriving at the conclusion that each Indian government should be a free entity with local autonomy and with the power to utilise its resources and to evolve its own growth by enlisting into its service the traditions, aspirations, and sentiments of its own people. No mere local "administrative unit," whether district or province, will suit our present situation or even our future destiny. Then there is the *second* need *viz.*, that of "the strengthening of power." No one of our Presidency or provincial governments can develop its administration properly, unless it has full powers of self-government enabling it to provide for its industrial requirements. If it is a mere "administrative unit" at the beck and call of the central unitary power, then our own growth will be stunted to a degree which will soon render our economic position untenable, as the needs of the unitary and central government will always overpower and dominate those of the provincial "administrative unit."

Moreover, we have seen in our own Presidency that the national consciousness and aspirations of the Andhras have developed marvellously in a few years, just as the Beharee nationality

has asserted itself and forced the Government of India to concede to it the privilege of forming a province of its own and separating itself from the dominating and self-assertive Bengalee people. Of course there is a commonness in the religious consciousness and civilisation which makes one part of India more or less like another,—though even here it has been claimed that there is such a thing as a specifically distinctive Maharatta religion, or the Sikh cult of the Panjab, or the Bengalee Vaishnavism of Chaitanya. Distinctiveness of national sentiment in politics or religion, however, is not incompatible with a common civilisation, as shown by the history of the movement of nationality in Europe during the last century. The growth of national aspiration in various parts of the Indian continent can only find satisfaction in the foundation or strengthening of separate provincial governments with ample powers of providing for their own separate needs and growth, while maintaining them in federal association and alliance with the supreme central power vested in the Government of India.

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The New Cult of Dis-obedience.

An Indian writer in the *Commonweal* of October 19, 1917 indulges in a violent denunciation of what he calls the "Cult of obedience" in India and writes glowingly and eloquently of the present change in the Indian temper. He says:—"The old-time habit of unreasoning submission has given place to the spirit of critical search and enquiry. Institutions and observances, social or political, are not deemed to be time-honoured and therefore unimpeachable. They are *now* to be tested and justified by their necessary or beneficial functions. Priestcraft in religion and repression in politics belong to the irrevocable past." This writer evidently misunderstands the entire import of Dharma. Dharma and Brahman sum up the two great ideals of India. Brahman is the *eternal* goal, and Dharma is the *eternal* path to its attainment. They are never proclaimed as conclusions reached by the processes of ratiocination or of adjustment to the social and political exigencies of the Community. They are not dependent for their validity on the will of a worldly sovereign, whether an autocratic king or a parliament possessing supreme legislative and controlling powers. Dharma is not law in the modern sense of that word. Every system of law, mediæval or modern is in a constant state of flux and reflux in response to the varying conditions of society. Law adjusts itself to social conditions and needs, but in India society has to adjust itself to Dharma as an ideal. For, it is the means to the attainment of the eternal goal of deliverance from the bondage of *samsara*,—of God-realisation and self-realisation. No "critical search and inquiry" is possible, or can prove of avail for the discovery of Dharma; No utilitarian tests or standards are applicable to it. What reasoning can do is to reconcile any seeming conflict between the rules of Dharma proclaimed by different Rishis, and to declare their exact import in their application to the exigencies of life. As belonging to the divine order of the world, they require no "justification"; and any "impeachment" of them can only proceed from persons

who are ignorant of their meaning and value. Moreover, it must be clear to all who have followed us so far that Dharma can never have its origin in "priestcraft." The priest in India has in his ministrations simply to follow the injunctions of the Sastras. Our priests—or Purohits—have very humble duties to perform, and hence receive only a very poor remuneration. The Hindu householder has to perform all Vedic rituals himself, and the priest only helps him with his special knowledge of the formulas and processes laid down in the authorities. Hence, to refuse obedience to the Sastraic precepts can only be interpreted as meaning that the end or goal they proclaim is not one which is acceptable to us Similarly, to render them faithful homage and comply with their requirements can never be interpreted as unworthy of men who have "a healthy craving for improvement," or "as detrimental to initiative and independence in any sphere of human activity." If the modern Hindu wants to be "left free to err" in matters of Dharma, he is thereby only left free to miss the goal of life, viz, self-realisatoin and God-realisation.

Mr. Montagu's Visit.

Lord Curzon is said to have declared in the House of Lords that "Mr. Montagu was going out on the understanding that he would make no speech at all" and that "there would be neither action nor speech" by him while here. In cases like this, speech is itself action. So he would not speak, and could not, without consulting the British Cabinet and obtaining its final decision regarding the changes to be inaugurated in India after the war. We think this is on the whole a wise decision, though this would doubtless deprive his visit of much of the interest which would temporarily attach to it owing to the excitement that would be caused everywhere if he spoke freely on all the views expressed before him. We are of opinion that, after he completes his programme of visits to various parts of India, the Viceroy should in consultation with him settle the programme of reform and announce it to the people of India.

Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao, our foremost statesman in all India to-day, said in his recent speech at Tanjore that Mr. Montagu has nowhere stated that "the present bureaucracy should be done away with and the character of the government changed." These are exactly the points on which the people of India have been agitating in congress for years, and now the Moslem League has joined it and made a similar demand for change. It seems to us clear that large changes are about to be introduced or else we should not see so much stir among the Anglo-Indian Community. The Indian leaders, therefore, must be ready with such a scheme as is workable and convince Mr. Montagu that it can be safely introduced.

The points to be chiefly attended to are two:—(1) the securing of a non-official majority in all Indian Councils; (2) the Council's control of the executive. Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao said at Tanjore:—"We are prepared to suggest checks and safeguards against any abuse of the powers granted to us." We have carefully scrutinised the correspondence columns of the leading newspapers, and find no suggestions regarding a working scheme of "checks and safeguards." Men are mainly

concerned with details regarding the allotment of seats to the various Communities, and do not bestow a thought on the more important questions to be decided. The Secretary of State is sure to consider with care and sympathy the representations made by his own countrymen in India who have embarked their capital on various undertakings, and so we have to convince him that "the checks and safeguards" by which we propose to guard against "the abuse of the powers granted to us" are such as he will deem satisfactory.

The Viceroy's veto is what will occur to all at once. But we believe that our leaders have so far declared themselves in favour of *suspensory*, not an *absolute*, veto. We consider this to be the most important of all the points to be considered. The Anglo-Indian Community are creating a great panic, as they did in the days of Lord Ripon's Viceroyalty. They succeeded then, and will doubtless do all they can now to secure their own interest. It is not enough to say that, in the Native states of India, their interests are safe, and the same would be the case here. In the Native States, they are able more or less to dominate the situation, and in fact to dictate what they want done for themselves, and sometimes gain a great deal more. Our view is that, in all cases of irreconcilable conflict between the Anglo-Indian and the Indian Communities and where the decisions of our Councils are such as they cannot support or approve, the Viceroy's decision, whether he approves or vetoes them, should be absolute and final. The Indian leaders, we consider, should not at present press for a suspensory veto.

Then there is the question of responsible government, or the control of the legislative assembly over the executive. Are we to have a permanent and nominated Executive Council as at present or a Cabinet of ministers whose existence is to be made to depend on their retaining the confidence of the majority in the Legislative Council? Here, also, we are of opinion that *festina lente* should be our motto, and we may well leave matters where they are. We are of opinion that no serious evil will arise if the question of the power of purse is decided as it ought to be.

The power of the purse ought to be left entirely to the discretion, determination, and control of the Legislative Council. As representation is to be conceded to us, the powers of taxation and expenditure must go with it. If our Legislative Councils secure the power to decide both taxation aud expenditure by the will of the majority, then all things will settle themselves in due course, and the will of the people must finally prevail. In England, for instance, the question of the royal veto and the constitution of the executive long remained lagging behind the true democratic conception of them, but no great harm was done as the House of Commons' control of the purse enabled it to secure all its aims and purposes. In India, too, the power of the purse must be secured, and with that we may rest content for the present.

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Notes and Comments.

A valued friend writes to us,—

"I have read the Prospectus with interest. The attempt is noble—if I may humbly say so, without impertinence—and it is not at all too early. The downward course of our nation has begun in right earnest and our distinguishing characteristic of true and unselfish spirituality is not able to assert itself in the minds of men and preponderate over materialism. The contact with the West might have brought us some benefits, but it has undermined the foundations of our society. We are now more eager to snatch at and enjoy evanescent "rights" which have their ultimate basis in might, than to discharge eternal duties based on everlasting Dharma. Pravritti has taken the place of Nivritti. And it looks as if contentment, quietness, and '*Santi*,' will soon be things of the past, and ever-increasing want, breathless competition and rivalry, and mutual animosity will reign in their stead.

It is highly necessary, therefore, to stem the tide and try our best to preserve the ancient ideals in their pristine glory. Reform is necessary, but the goal should not be lost sight of or blurred, if it is to be well-directed.

Your proposal to allow concession rates in favour of students is highly commendable, for the future is with them. The old Gurukula-vasam and Brahmacharyam have ceased to exist and it cannot be denied that we have been utterly neglecting the religious growth of our young men. It is no wonder at all, they have been led astray, amidst so many temptations and allurements. The irreducible minimum of our duty towards the younger generation is to acquaint them with the bedrocks of true Hindu culture and civilisation and their superiority over the sandy foundations of purely materialistic civilisations."

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In the above communication, Hindu spirituality is eulogised, and the results of contact with the material civilisation of the West are condemned. There are many in these days who receive any reference to spirituality with a smile of sarcasm and contempt. We wish to explain briefly what spirituality means to us, Hindus. The natural tendency of the human mind and senses is outgoing,—*i.e.*, towards the objects of the outside world. The Hindu sages declare that the pleasures gained from the outside world of matter are transient and unsatisfying, and that the tendency to seek them must be counteracted by the mind and senses being turned towards the interior self—the *Antaratman* अन्तरात्मन्. A famous and oft-quoted passage of the Kathopanishad says :—

पराञ्चि खानि व्यतृणत्स्वयंभूस्तस्मात्पराङ्पश्यति नान्तरात्मन् । कश्चिद्धीरः प्रत्यगात्मानमैक्षदावृत्तचक्षुरमृतत्वमिच्छन् ॥

"The eternally self-dependent (Lord of the Universe) has vexed the senses so as they tend to go outward (towards their objects) and so (the jiva) sees what is outside, and not the internal self. Some rare man of discrimination whose eyes are turned back beholds the interior self, because he desires immortality." Few are they who truly desire immortality and want to gain it even here, so that they may have the assured enjoyment of the permanent bliss of the Self. Man alone has the wonderful gift of the power to discriminate what is ephemeral from what is eternal. He can also gain the latter, if he will. But few have the courage to turn away from the allurements of the joys of sense. And to do so is to be spiritual.

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When once man, perceiving the unsatisfying character of sense-indulgence of all kinds and disgusted with their coarseness, determines to gain the immortal and transcendent self and the joy (Ananda) which it is, untarnished even by a trace or shadow of contact with matter—what is he to do? The Upanishad text above quoted says,—"turn your *eyes* towards the interior soul." This is the process known as Yoga and *prescribed* later on in the same Upanishad. Indeed, the senses must *all* be turned inward towards the Self, but the *eyes* are specially mentioned in the text quoted,—for they are the most easily attracted by outward objects, and also as easily turned

away from them if one wills it. This process, however, is not, and cannot be, learned from books, but must pass from man to man, even as one light is kindled by another. It must be learned by one who becomes a disciple to a Guru, and is ready to render service and obedience to a Guru in the manner prescribed in the sacred authorities. This, again, is spirituality.

* * *

But in all ages the Guru is more easily attainable than the earnest disciple who feels inclined to seek the Guru. All the discipline of the Hindu Dharma is prescribed only in order to prepare a man to attain to that state of mind in which he will feel the irresistible need of a Guru and of the Yoga-methods taught by him. Dharma is the preliminary to the practice of Yoga. What the followers of the Veda and Vedanta call Dharma, the Yogis of the school of Patanjali call *Kriya-Yoga* ; and while the Vedantins enumerate the various processes of *japa*, *mantra*, *homa*, *svadhyaya* (study of Vedas), &c., as constituting Dharma, the Yogins enumerate the processes of *Kriya-Yoga* as *tapas*, *svadhyaya*, *Isvara-pranidhana*. Without passing through such a preliminary discipline, it is impossible to attain to that turning of the senses and the mind towards the interior self, known as Yoga or Samadhi. Hence this preliminary process of training the human mind, quite as much as its later result of Yogic meditation, is also known as spirituality.

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Again, the Vaishnava saints point out that the grace of the blessed Bhagavan alone can ultimately lead us to the immortality (*amritatva*) or release from the bondage of matter already spoken of, and therefore advocate unconditional and unremitting self-surrender to Him who resides in the hearts of all as the best of all means of winning His grace. Sri Bhagavan's Mercy is infinite and flows graciously and ever towards the entire universe, but it is necessary that we solicit it and throw ourselves on it as our sole refuge, so as our soul may be caught in the irresistible tide of its gentle and responsive influence. Avoiding all conduct which would not be acceptable to Him, with absolute and unlimited faith in His Mercy, and with a keen sense of our own littleness and unworthiness, we must offer our heart's homage of adoration to Him and earnestly supplicate his saving grace and loving protection. In this condition of humility and dependence, the mind thinks of none else but God, scorns the idle pomps and vanities of the world, and feels ever happy, strong and serene,—for the man who is a true devotee of the blessed Bhagavan has gained the support and strength of Him who is the source of all strength, happiness, and peace, The Bhagavan's true devotee and servant does his duties to his family, to his fellow-men, to his state and king, to all and every one, without stint and without a stress or strain on his mind, and is thus enabled to spread unmeasured beneficence and happiness around him. His life is a blessing to all, for he knows no self, and he sees the Bhagavan, his works and his forms, all around him. All men, all life the entire order of the universe is to him the Bhagavan's sport and manifestation, and through them all he wends his way smoothly and gladly,—for he thinks *ever* and *solely* of Him who is his sole refuge and desire, and he sees neither himself, nor others, nor aught else as separate from Him. This is spirituality, and perhaps its sweetest perfume or ripest fruit.

THE INCOME TAX BILL.

When I was a student in the B. A. class of the Presidency College, the proposal was started in 1860 to impose the Income-tax. Sir Charles Trevelyan, then Governor of Madras, deprecated the tax as inquisitorial, capricious and altogether unsuited to the people of India. But the proposal was carried out, mainly to make the foreign firms and the Indian traders pay for their protection by the Government.

But lo! the income tax has been stretched to "other sources" and to inter-family loans for marriage, agriculture and debt-payments. When it is difficult for the ordinary citizens to meet this obnoxious and often arbitrary demand, the new Bill proposes to inflict *penalties for not paying in time!* I hope the Government of India will modify the tax and the penal clauses.

A. SANKARIAH, B.A., F.M.U.

Gnana Yoga—I.

(*continued.*)

(A lecture delivered by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA in America to a class of students *on December 18-1895.*)

Do you remember the story of the great Sage to whom the King said that Asia Minor was a very happy place. And the Sage asked him "Who is the happiest man ? I have not seen any one very happy." "Nonsense, I am the happiest man in the world" the king said. "Wait, Sir, till the end of your life; don't be in a hurry," and the sage went out. In the course of time that king was conquered by the Persians, and they ordered him to be burned alive, and the funeral bier was prepared; and he cried aloud "Solon". Then he told the story, and the Emperor was kind enough to forgive him.

Such is the life-story of each one of us; such is the tremendous power of nature. We are always hoping against hope; this hope, this chimera is after us; we are always hoping for something.

There was a great King in ancient India who was once asked four questions, of which one was "What is the most wonderful thing in this world ?" Hope; This is the most wonderful thing; Day and night we see people around us falling down, and yet we think we will not die; we never think that we will die, and that we will suffer. Each one of us thinks that success will be his, hoping against hope, against all odds, against all mathematical reasoning. Nobody is ever really happy here. If a man is wealthy and has plenty to eat, his stomach is out of order, and he cannot eat it. If his stomach is good, as hard as iron, and he has the digestion of a cormorant, he has nothing to put into his stomach. If he is rich he has no children. If he is hungry and poor he has a whole regiment of children, and does not know what to do with them. Why is it so ? Because happiness and misery are the obverse and reverse of the same coin; he who takes happiness must take misery also. We all have this foolish idea that we can have happiness without misery, and it has got such possession of us, that we have not control of the senses.

When I was in Boston a young man came up to me and gave me a little piece of paper on which was written Mr. So-and-so, and Number So-and-so house, and it went on to say "All the wealth and all the happiness of the world are yours if you only know how to get it. If you come to me I will teach you how to get it. Charge $ 5." He gave me this and said, "What do you think of this ?" I said "Young man, why don't you get the money to print this; you have not even enough money to print this." He did not understand it; he was infatuated with the idea, that he could get the wealth and happiness of the world in masses without its pains. These are the two extremes into which men are running; one is extreme optimism, when everything is rosy and nice and good; the other extreme pessimism, when everything seems to be against them. The majority of men, nevertheless, have more or less undeveloped brains. One in a million we see with a well developed brain. Hither the remainder have idiosyncracies, or are monomaniacs, or maniacs, or something else. Naturally we are running into these extremes. When we are healthy and young we think that all the wealth of the world will be ours, and when later we get kicked about by society like footballs, and get older, we sit in a corner and croak and throw a bucket of cold water on others. Few men know that with pleasure there is pain, and with pain pleasure, and as pain is disgusting so is pleasure, as it is the twin brother of pain. It is equally derogatory to the glory of man that he should be going after pain, and equally derogatory that he should be going after pleasure, so both should be turned aside by men whose reason is balanced, and who have not a screw loose; we should look down upon them as fit only for children. Why will not men seek liberty from being played upon ? This moment we are whipped, and when we begin to weep, nature gives us a dollar, again we are whipped and when we weep, nature gives us a piece of gingerbread, and we begin to laugh again.

The sage will want liberty; he finds that these things are all vain, that there is no end to these pleasures and these pains. How many rich people in the world want to find fresh pleasures; all pleasures are old, and they want new ones. Don't you see how many foolish things they are inventing every day, just to titillate the nerves for a moment, and that done there will come a reaction. Like a stream of sheep; what one does the others all do without thinking what they are doing. If the leading sheep fall into the ditch all the rest follow and break their necks; they do not care. When a man begins to see the foolishness of all these things, and to feel he ought not to be played upon or bound down this way by nature, that it is slavery he is in, if a man tells him a few kind words he begins to smile and stretch his mouth from ear to ear, or when a man says a few harsh words he begins to weep, he will see that he is a slave to a bit of bread, to the breath, to air, to dress, slave to patriotism, to country, to name, to fame. He is in the midst of slavery till the real man has become hidden inside his bondage. This is what you call a man. When a man realises all this then comes the desire to be free, an intense desire comes. If a piece of burning charcoal be placed on a man's head, how he stretches to throw it down; so will that man's struggles be to become free.

The next discipline is also a very difficult one—*Nityanityaviveka*: discriminating which is true and which is untrue, between the eternal and the transitory. God alone is eternal, everything else is transitory. Everyone dies; the angels die, men die, animals die, earths die, Sun, Moon and Nature all die; everything is a constant change. The mountains of to-day were the oceans of yesterday, and will be oceans to-morrow. Everything is in a state of flux; Sun, Moon, stars, body are constantly changing, the whole universe is a mass of change. But there is One who never changes, and that is God; and the nearer we get to Him the less will be the change for us; the less will Nature be able to work on us; and when we reach Him and stand with Him we will conquer nature, we will be masters of these phenomena of nature, and they will have no effect on us. Then will the bullock's blindness fall and he will know his own way. You see, if we really have those four disciplines we really do not require anything else in this world; all knowledge is within us; all perfection is there already in the soul. But this perfection is being covered up by this nature; layer after layer of nature is covering this purity of the soul. What have we to do? Really we do not develop our souls at all? What can develop the Eternal? We simply take the veil off; so by these disciplines, the veil will come away and the soul will manifest itself in purity and its natural innate freedom.

(*To be continued.*)

Pencillings by the way—II.

By S. P. Thiagarajan.

It is one of the many profound sayings of our eternally glorious Vivekananda that *Brahmatejas* superadded to *Kshatriya-virya* can alone elevate the Holy Land to her rightful place among the nations of the world. It was this same idea that Lala Lajput Rai echoed when he declared —though somewhat crudely—that Hindu nationalism was an essential pre-condition of Indian nationalism. *Nationalism* has a twang of horrid immoralism about it; and personally I would have preferred the word *solidarity*. But how, in heaven's name, is Hindu nationalism or solidarity possible if we are to uproot, as some amongst us fondly want to, the ancient ideal of 'a stable social order enthroned on a spiritual basis?' Rightly, therefore, do we all hold that, as the institution of caste has preserved our culture against overwhelming obstacles, it alone can make us in the future the great race that we have been in the hoary past. All conservative progressivists amongst us advocate the maintenance of caste in all its essentials, "while recasting it so as increasingly to approximate towards the realisation of the *Chaturvarnya* as laid down by Sri Krishna, to remove such of its features as may be

found unsuited to the environment and to restore what research and tradition help to establish as having belonged to it when the Hindu people and civilisation were in the plenitude of national health and achieved their lasting triumphs in that far-off, but glorious antiquity, which is still the wonder of the world and the animating influence tending to the preservation of our unfading vitality."

Unfortunately, the solution of this vexed problem is not so easy and is being daily further complicated. A multitude of historic heresies have risen in combination against the marvellous wisdom of our ancients. As is only to be expected in discussions of this kind, a good deal of nonsense has been said and written both for and against this organismal conception of society, to borrow the phraseology of a brilliant protagonist of Varnasrama Dharma. It is hardly within the scope of short discursive notes like these—nor is the writer competent to undertake the task—to enter into a philosophical disquisition on the caste system with its social and political and ethical implications. It may be, as some anonymous scribe writes to a contemporary, a diabolical institution whose evils are so tersely summarised for the benefit of Hindu readers by the Christain Literature Society, who have enumerated and catalogued those evils under the authority of the name of Pandit Sivanath Sastri of the Church of the New Dispensation, and tacked on to their publications. It may be, as the ultra-orthodox contend and the mass of our people believe, co-eval with creation itself. Both may be right, both may be wrong. I offer no opinion for the present. It would be easy to argue, for example, that caste ought to be maintained as, according to a renowned European philosopher, no practice can have greater authority for being firmly adhered to than that which "God gave and ancestors obeyed." It would be equally easy to shatter caste in half a minute—in words—by flinging against it some of those catchwords of a spurious and blink-eyed democracy. Elaborate treatises could be written—and indeed have been written—for and against caste. The question has rarely been approached in the true historic spirit.

Reserving for a more leisurely occasion the development of our ideas of the origin and the sociological and ethical import of the caste system, we would on this ocasion hint at the historic aspect of the problem. It will hardly be contended seriously that no national life could be perfect without the *chaturvarnya*. No modern or ancient nation with claims to greatness was without it. Difference there undoubtedly is, but that is due to national temperament and genius in each case. But the central fact is there that no nation can be great or perfect without the *chaturvarnya* any more than you can expect a seed to sprout forth without providing air, soil, water and a good deal of sunshine for it. I refrain from historical illustrations for fear of cumbering a short article with elaborate and long-winded arguments. But the history of our own country speaks with no uncertain voice on this question. Spite of various attempts, the last of which was under the spirited Maharashtra hero and nation-builder, Sivaji, the Kshatriya disappeared from our society—the Kshatriya as we have known him and our literature has portrayed him. The advent of the British led to the dwindling and the final decay of the Vaisyas—as there is ample authority to show. The result was that the Brahmin and the Sudra were left. As is inevitable under such circumstances, the tendency is for the Brahmin to gravitate towards Sudrahood while preserving all outward signs of the Brahmin. Nor is this an unnatural phenomenon; we see, that the earth attracts purer but less vigorous bodies to itself. Hence the result is what our sages have predicted as happening in this age of Kali—*Varna-sankara*. When the great national types disappear and the mould of society gets broken, the result is such utter depravity and degeneracy as we see in modern India. The problem therefore which confronts all of us is to bring back "the old stalwart Marathonian capacity of body and soul" of the Holy People—in other words we must work for the Satyayuga to return. This can only be done by revi-

ving the *Brahmatejas*, or the lost spiritual force of the nation. For, it cannot be too often repeated in our degenerate days, that when spirituality is lost all is lost. This then is the problem before us.

The Brahmin stands for spirituality, for the things of the intellect as opposed to sordid material desires. He is the spiritual preceptor and father of the race, firm, loving, gentle and kind. The Kshatriya stands for military prowess and all the higher virtues that flow from it. He is the defender of the spirituality of the race, distributing justice and performing his royal functions with even-handed impartiality. The Vaisya is there and ranks next to these two classes as the producer and distributor of wealth. The fruits of his labour are assured to him by the strength and justice of his king ; while the patient preceptor of the race was there to put him in the way of obtaining knowledge and thereby salvation. Last come the Sudras who perform lowly but very necessary functions to the body politic. That was the ancient Hindu Sociological system —Brahminical, as some prefer to call it. A modern European philosopher contends that the division will be quite logical if the third and fourth were merged in one large class which he would call the mediocre base of the social pyramids. But then the lowest caste in the Hindu society corresponds to what is generally termed the proletariate in modern European society—a very necessary but also a ruin-bearing element of society. It is surely folly to confound them with the large mass of capitalists and other merchant princes of the West, functions analogous to whose were under the Hindu polity performed by the Vaisyas. The pages of Indian History bear an eloquent testimony to the fact that the appalling moral, intellectual and physical torpidity of the race is due to this ancient mould of society having grown rusty and broken in certain places. This is not the place to inquire into the causes of this unfortunate calamity. It is none the less historical fact. A consideration of all the cirumstances of the case concurs therefore in pointing to the rejuvenation of caste as the only solution of our complex problems. As a preliminary, the "Hindu Message" aims at the unification of sub-castes. But the task, supremest in importance and of immediate moment, is the bringing back of the *Brahmatejas*. Spiritual force can always raise up material force to defend it. Owing to a number of historical causes, fatal in their cumulative effect, the Brahmin fell from his lofty pedestal; and in these degenerate days has shown in increasing measure a tendency to gravitate towards the lowest caste, as already said. Exceptions there have always been, but who can deny that the vast majority of Brahmins are actuated by an ignoble desire to serve, to eke out a miserable living by hanging on to the coat tails of men in authority and influence? To return to the central point whence we started, a revival of the ancient *chaturvarnya* can alone lead us on to our destined future.

The tolerant reader will pardon a detached observation. The fashion is to calumniate the Brahmin and to hold up the deathless ideals of the race to contempt. Infinitely greater souls than these latter-day pseudo-reformers had in the past excercised all their ingenuity and wisdom in an attempt to batter our society. Of what avail their efforts had been, tradition says in its own luminous way. The brilliant gentleman who till lately led the pseudo-reformers of this Presidency but has now been called upon to the discharge of the highest public function open to an Indian, which we are sure he will perform to his credit and to the honour of his country—once declared to an audience of his friends and admirers that the dominance of Brahmin ideals was the bane of public life in India. Enthusiasm carries us off our feet and at such moments we utter brilliant nonsense which tend to aggravate the evil we all deplore; and thus generate a psychic force fruitful of evil to the community. The country has a right to expect that the foremost men of the community should not run off the rails in such a despicable manner. Is it true or would it bear demonstration to maintain that any large body of our itinerant throng of statesmen and patriots are actuated by Brahmin ideals as the

R Krishnaswami Sast

phrase is understood by the lovers of our ancient lore? Is it not the fact on the contrary that not Brahman ideals but the narrow huckstering and bargaining, the elbowing and pushing of Western commercialism have rendered our public life miserable, petty and non-moral? As has been observed by a far-shining soul of our epoch, the fact is that methods of political agitation imported into this land from the West have made almost a wreck of our society—methods whereby on the same platform appear together a motely and ill-assorted throng, members of which differ from each other, as the poles asunder, in their moral senses, mental outlook and environments. The result is an unctuous smoothness of exterior which is made to do duty for all true moral excellences, a hypocrisy in speech and action such as has been pictured by Mr. Lajpat Rai in a memorable letter of his nearly a decade ago. Except on the familiar argument that whoso drives fat oxen must himself be fat also, we cannot understand where Brahmin ideals come in in our public life. Verily it seems as if Swift were right when he said that mankind were just as fit for flying as for thinking. Were it the fact really that Brahmin ideals dominated our public life, were the *motif* underlying the activities of our public men, we would have no reason to deplore, as we now have to do, the competitive selfishness and greed among our public men which is a shameful sign of the times. The fact is that both leaders and followers require a deeper *sadhana*, an inward uplifting, a more impetuous force behind thought and deed. It has been brought home to us by experience after experience that—to use the word of an austere Indian—not in this strength of a raw, unmoralised Europe shall we conquer. It is the soul that must conquer in India's uprising. To uproot ancient tradions and the chosen instruments of preserving our deathless ideals is certainly the last and clumsiest way of restoring India to her pristine grandeur.

The Bhagavad Gita.

With an English Exposition

By K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI B. A. B. L.

(The substance of the lectures now being delivered at Trichinopoly.)

INTRODUCTORY.

(*continued*)

I have thus dwelt at length on the Hindu conception of *Dharma* as that is the basic truth on which rest the golden doctrines of the *Gita* about the attainment of beatitude. We have to rise from the unregulated activity of *Kama* or desire which in conjunction with intellect leads us to depths far below the level of the brutes. From *Kama* to *Dharmâviruddha Kama*, from the latter to *Nishkama Karma* from the latter to *Dhyana* and *Gnana*, and from them to *Moksha*—such is, the golden ladder of the spiritual life.

For the attainment of this *Sraddha* (faith) is necessary. *Sraddha* is the माता (mother) who will show to us our Divine Father. Who but the mother can show us our father

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्दधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।

नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥

This divine virtue of *Sraddhâ* will eventually lead to the attainment of *abhyasa* and *vairagya* and eventually to the raptures of God-love and God-knowledge and to the final attainment of union with God.

स्वाध्याययोगसंपत्त्या परमात्मा प्रकाशते ।

I shall now deal with a few questions raised at the outset by many inquiring modern minds. The first of these is, whether Sri Krishna is God. In regard to this matter we must at the beginning proceed on faith and await the bliss of realising His divinity as a fact of consciousness. Concurrent and uniform testimony of holy people for ages vouched for the truth of the fact that concentration of mind and purity of heart can help us to achieve the vision of Godhead. If we can accept such testimony in mundane matters—we are doing that every day—we may without violation of our logical faculty do the same in spiritual matters. The declarations of the Gita and of holy sages, when taken on trust and acted up to with sincerity and devotion, will become self-

evident and blissful facts of consciousness. When the mind is made calm and serene by purity and dispassion and devotion, the glory of God will shine there as the full moon shines reflected on the bright surface of a tranquil lake. The divinity of Sri Krishna is a truth and has been proclaimed even in the Upanishads. The Gopala Purva Tapani Upanishad describes Him thus :

सत्पुडण्रीकनयनं मेघाभं वैद्युतां वरम् ।

द्विभुजं ज्ञानमुद्राढ्यं वनमालिनमीश्वरम् ॥

The Lord's divinity is supported by the clearest and most credible and unequivocal testimony, by the words of the holy and perfected men of all ages, of those who had not the two defects of incompleteness of knowledge and absence of disinterestedness. The inner realisation of the divinity of the Lord will come after we become worthy of it by service and love and wisdom. बंहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते—says the Lord in the Gita.

The next question raised is, whether the words of the *Gita* are Sri Krishna's own words or not ? There is nothing inherently absurd in the view that Sri Krishna actually spoke the words of the *Gita* on the battlefield. Even in the case of human beings utterance becomes rhythmical under the stress of emotion. The metre of the Gita is so simple that until very recently there were scholars who could discourse in it offhand on the most abstruse subjects. Is it wonderful that the Lord discoursed in the *anushtup* metre to Arjuna on the problems of life and death and the means to the attainment of immortality ? There is however an orthodox school of interpreters that thinks that Vyasa has given the discourse of the Lord in words as near the Lord's words as possible, preserving most faithfully the spirit of the Lord's teachings. Vyasa was according to us an incarnation of the Lord. व्यासाय विष्णुरूपाय says a well-known verse. The Lord says in Chapter X of the Gita: मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः Hence even in this view there is no limitation set on the value of the *Gita*.

Again, some people say that the path to salvation as stated in the *Gita* is easy and others say that it is difficult. The path described in the *Gita* should be trod with the utmost care, discrimination, and loyalty. In fact, it is simply trying to set the current back and carry the stream to its source. It requires immense energy and concentration of will to stem the river of desire and to undo all that we have done in the past. The easiness of the path lies in the possibility of our having access to the central fountain of power and wisdom, in our identification of ourselves with the Lord, or rather in our complete surrender of our too aggressive limited self unto Him in a passion of love.

Some ask, is the ethical system of the Gita practical ? Arjuna felt it to be so in the face of one of the most trying situations in life and said

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसंदेहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥

What better proof can there be to show that the ethical system of the Gita is eminently practical and is not a mere matter of speculation unrelated to life ?

(*To be continued.*)

TO THE GLORY OF TRICHINOPOLY.

I. Monument of Historic fame!
The heir of a mighty name!
Thy Rock—the marvel of nature,
Chiselled in its fine stature,
Now doth brood in solemn peace,
When soulless strife doth cease.

II. By the holy Cauvery watered,
By Lord Sriranga fostered,
By the famous fane conspicuous,
Thou appeal'st to races promiscuous,
The Cauvery doth wash my land,
And sacred is its very sand.

III. And are shrines of lore lacking,
To aid spirit unflagging ?
Labour thou for the National Cause,
Let nothing make you pause,
Till Schools into Colleges bloom,
To dispel the ignorant gloom.

IV. Hail! Thou glorious city, live on,
Let others sing of thee anon,
Firm as thy Rock remain,
Let storms rage in vain,
Eternal, sacred and old,
Be thou fresh with forces untold.

S. Ambravaneswar, M.A. B.L.,

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